

STARBLAZER

A detailed illustration of a futuristic cityscape from an aerial perspective. A large, yellow, multi-segmented space station or orbital platform is positioned in the upper left, with a bright beam of light emanating from it. Below it, a brown, mechanical structure resembling a giant robot or a complex machine is visible. The city below is densely packed with buildings and streets, with a prominent red structure resembling a bridge or a large crane in the lower right. The sky is a deep blue with some white clouds.

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 94

18p

TERRIBLE DANGERS LURKED
BENEATH THE SURFACE OF
THIS ARTIFICIAL WORLD

THE MEGALOI MENACE

STARBLAZER



BY THE THIRTIETH CENTURY
MANKIND HAD TAKEN ROOT ALL
OVER THE GALAXY. BANDS OF
PIONEERS HAD EVEN COLONIZED THE
HABITABLE WORLDS OUT BEYOND
THE PERIPHERY . . . THE GALACTIC
CLUSTERS. EARTH PATROLS
COVERED THE VAST AREA
CONSTANTLY ON THE LOOKOUT FOR
TROUBLE, BUT WHEN TROUBLE DID
COME, IT CAME FROM A TOTALLY
UNEXPECTED DIRECTION.

The MEGALOMENACE

A BOARD THE ESCORT VESSEL OF AN EARTH GRANARY CONVOY, DEEP IN SPACE...

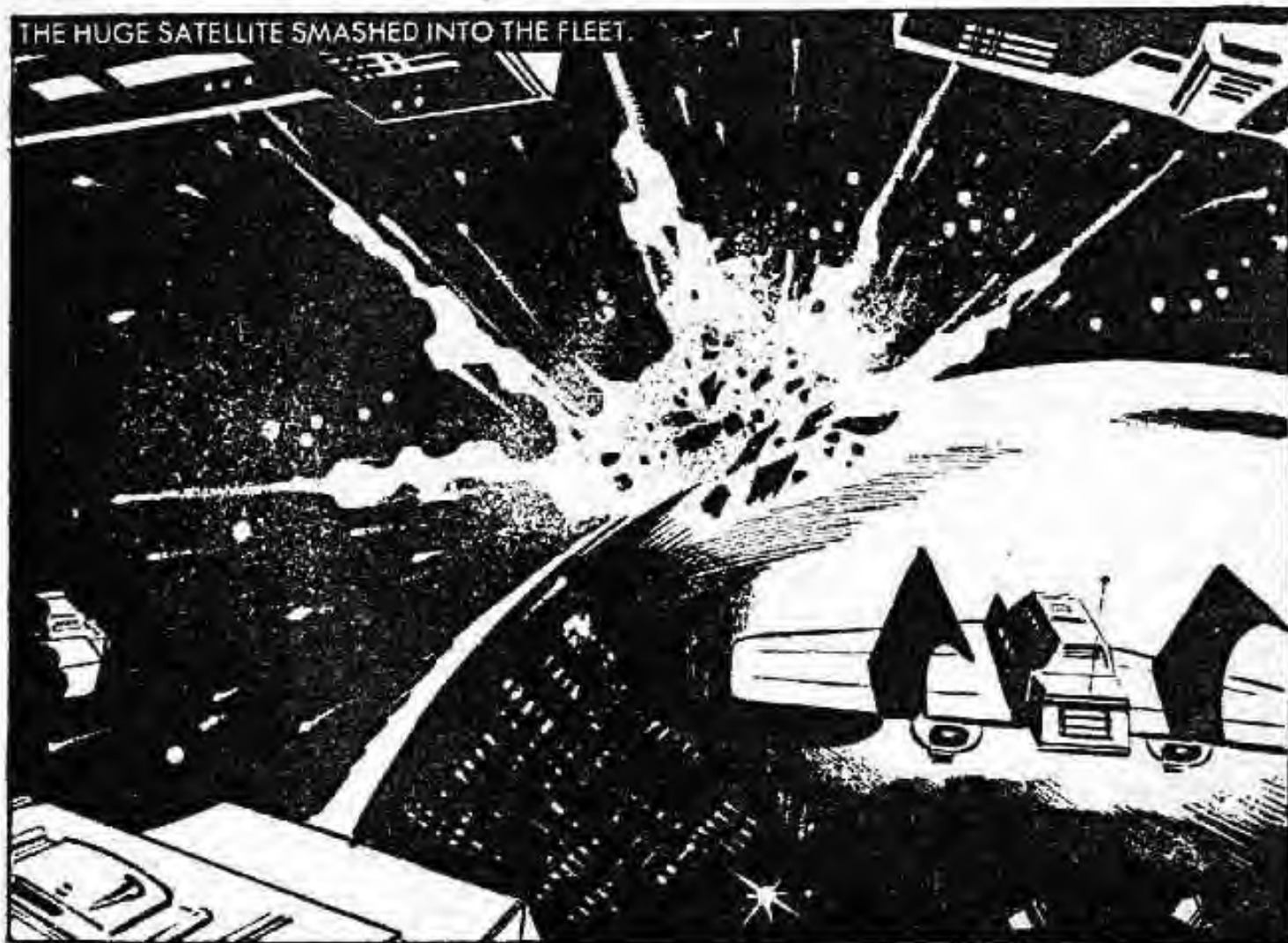


THE GRANARY CONVOY PLIED REGULARLY BETWEEN THE STACHUS FARMING CLUSTERS AND THE HOME GALAXY.

IT'S HEADING
STRAIGHT FOR US.

JUPE! IT'S A SATELLITE BATTLEWORLD!

THE HUGE SATELLITE SMASHED INTO THE FLEET.





WITH DEATH AND DEBRIS LITTERING SPACE, THE BATTLEWORLD MOVED ON.



IN HIS CENTRAL WORLD OFFICE, ON EARTH, THE DIRECTOR OF THE GALACTIC SECURITY SERVICE SUMMONED AGENT HART TALLIS.



THE NAVY'S THERE, BUT THEY CAN'T FIND A SINGLE CLUE AS TO WHAT HAPPENED. FROM THE ENTIRE FLEET WE RECEIVED ONLY ONE S.O.S. — AND SO FAR NOT A SINGLE SURVIVOR HAS BEEN FOUND.



IN THE DESPATCHING CENTRE OF THE GALACTIC SECURITY SERVICE ...



GALACTIC CLUSTER 7. THOUSANDS OF WORLDS, MOSTLY UNEXPLORED. WE MUST FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED.

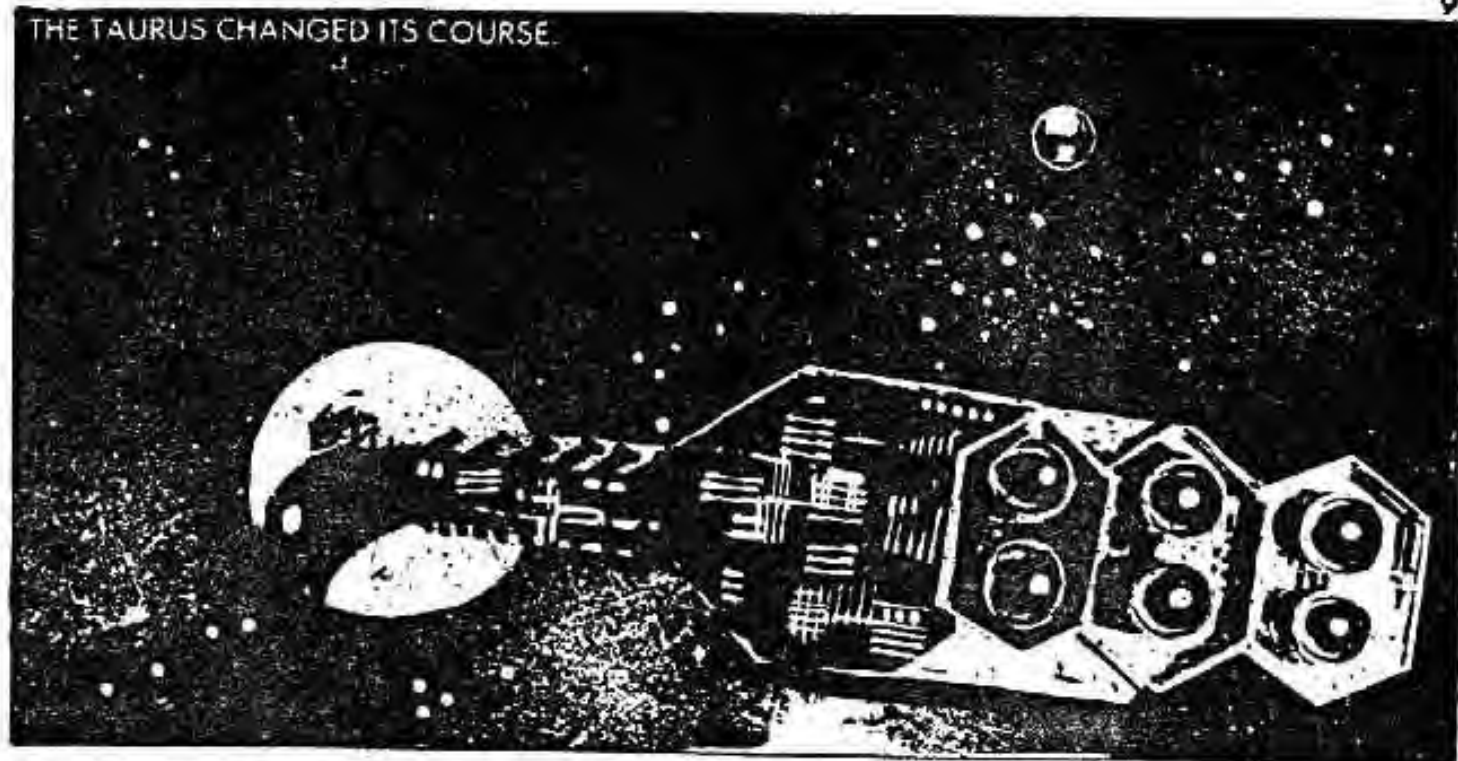
HART LEFT EARTH, AND SET COURSE FOR THE GRANARY CONVOY'S LAST POSITION.

ISAK, THE INTERNAL SENTIENT ANALOGUE COMPUTER, CONTROLLED TAURUS, HART'S SHIP—

YOU'RE IN CHECK, ISAK.

PERHAPS SO, HART, BUT I'M GETTING A MESSAGE FROM THE NAVY. WE'RE DIVERTED TO LOCATION 198.3—
106.37.


THE TAURUS CHANGED ITS COURSE.



A UNIT LATER IT MADE CONTACT, AND TALLIS TRANSFERRED TO THE FLAGSHIP—



HART SAW ALL THAT REMAINED OF THE STACHUS FLEET.



IS THAT ALL
THAT'S LEFT?


TALLIS QUESTIONED THE CAPTAIN—

HAVE YOU FOUND ANY
FLIGHT BOXES?

NOT YET! WE'RE STILL LOOKING. IT'S A
SHAMBLES OUT THERE—EVERY SHIP
DESTROYED!

THE FLIGHT BOX WAS THE DISASTER RECORDER CARRIED IN ALL SHIPS.

ADMIRAL, WE'VE LOCATED A BLACK BOX—
IT'S BADLY DAMAGED!

A man in a flight suit is running through a corridor filled with wreckage and debris. The scene is chaotic, with various mechanical parts and structural elements scattered around him. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows.

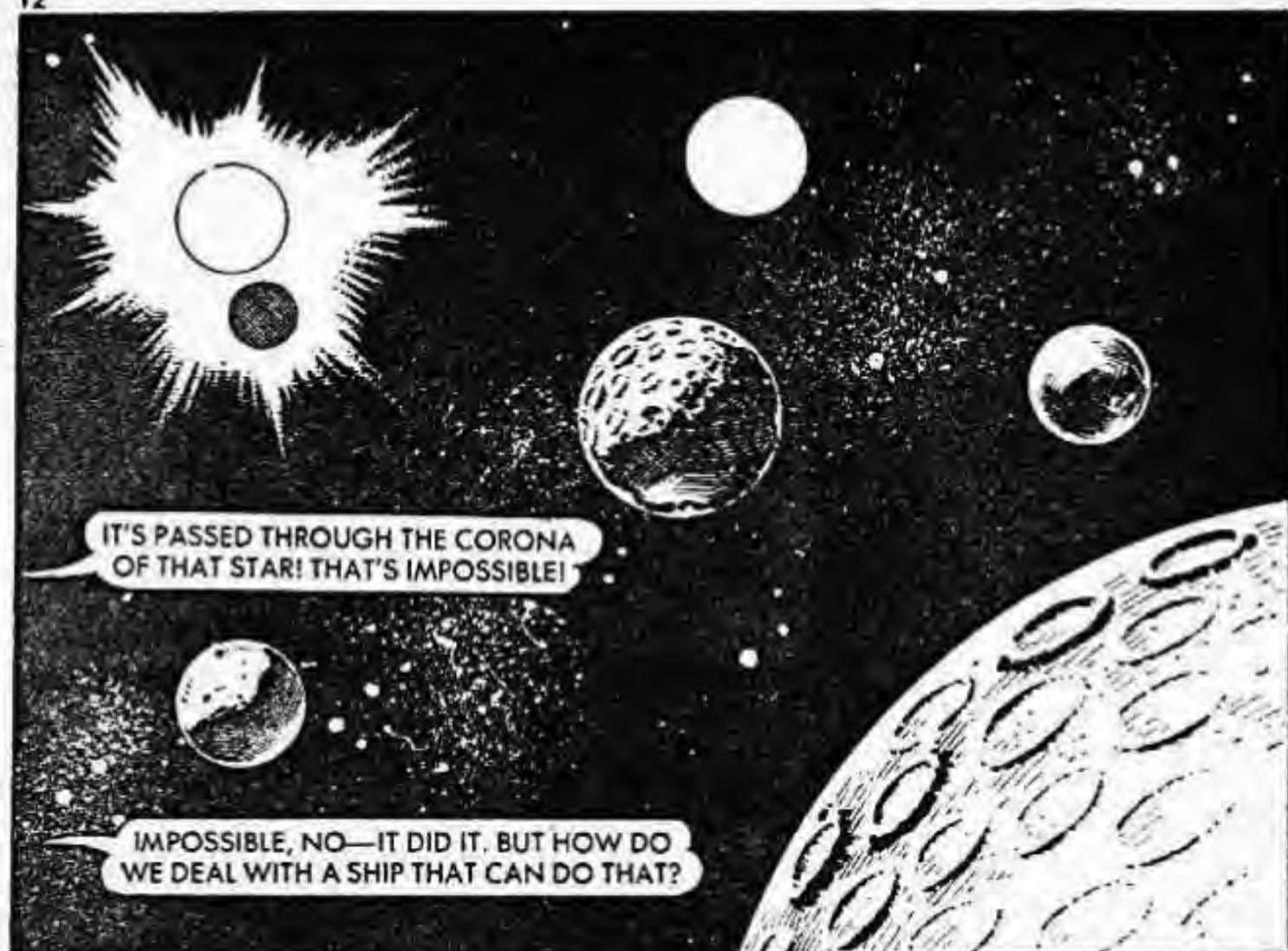
THE BLACK BOX WAS LINKED TO A VID-SCREEN—

THE BLACK BOX KEPT RECORDING, EVEN
AFTER THE SHIPS WERE DESTROYED.

IT IS A BATTLEWORLD!

GREAT SPACE!

Two men are shown from the chest up, looking intently at a large vid-screen. The screen displays a vast, chaotic battleworld with a large, bright, starburst-like explosion in the center. The men are in a control room, with various instruments and controls visible in the foreground. The scene is filled with a sense of awe and discovery.

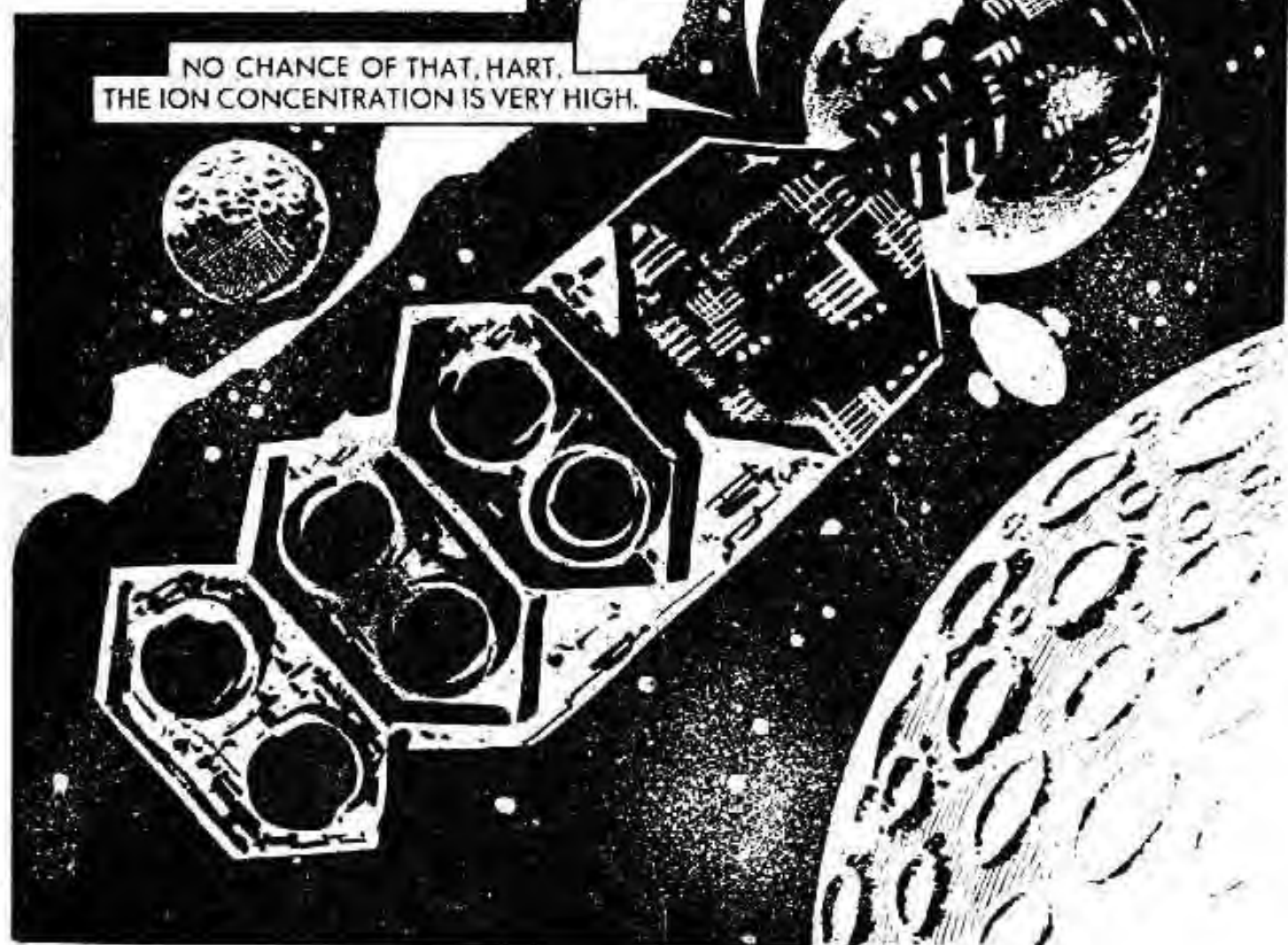




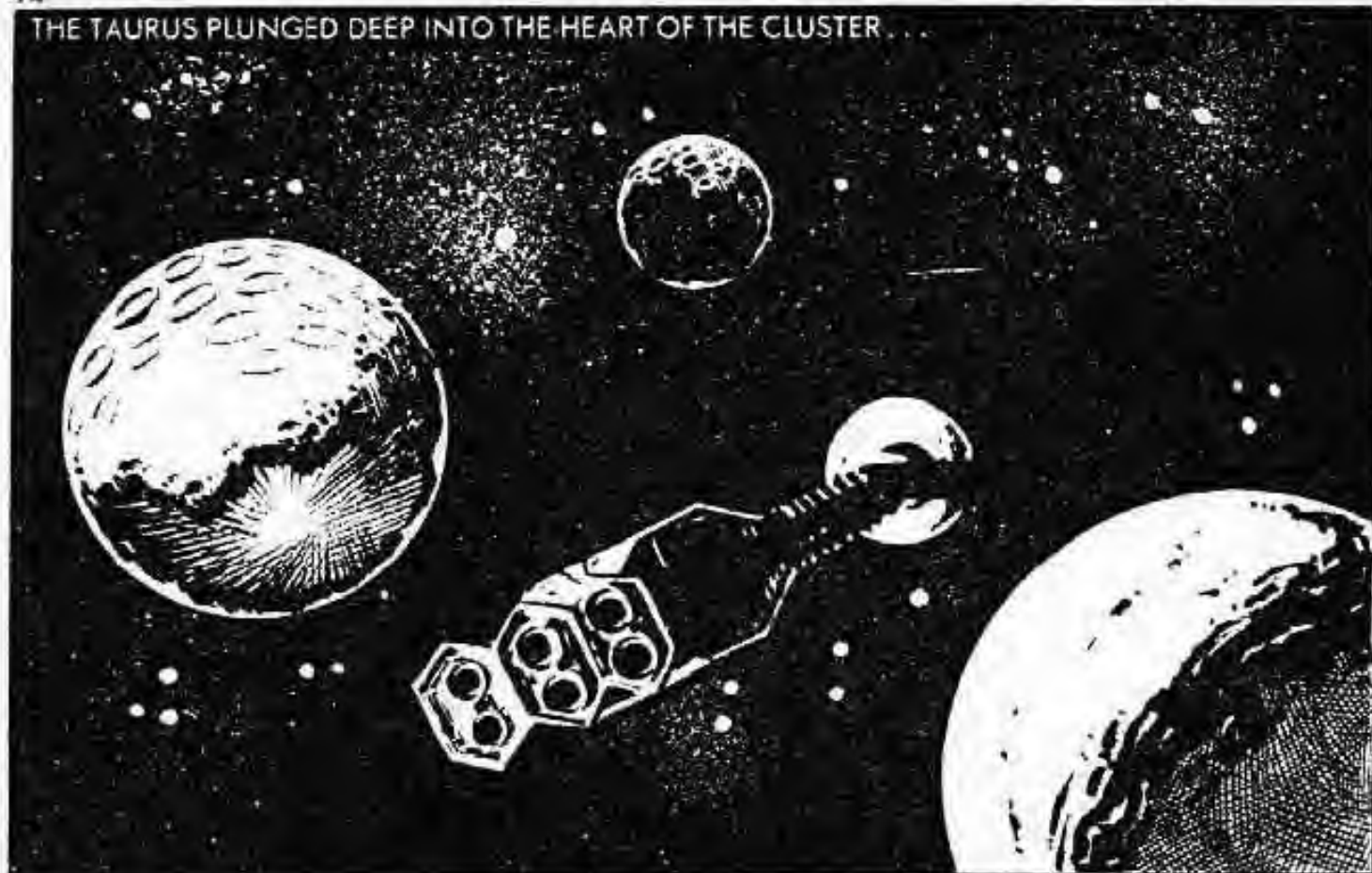
THE TAURUS SET OFF IN PURSUIT.

DON'T LOSE THE TRAIL, ISAK.

NO CHANCE OF THAT, HART. THE ION CONCENTRATION IS VERY HIGH.



THE TAURUS PLUNGED DEEP INTO THE HEART OF THE CLUSTER.



STRAIGHT TOWARDS THE PLANET FYLAX.

IS THERE LIFE
THERE, ISAK?

MY SENSORS DETECT NONE, BUT THEY DO DETECT
ARTEFACTS—ALL THE CONSTRUCTION WORK IS AT
LEAST A MILLION YEARS OLD.



THERE ARE ROADS AND A PYLON WHICH IS MADE OF NEUTRONIUM, THE HEAVIEST AND HARDEST SUBSTANCE KNOWN.

LET'S LAND AND INVESTIGATE FURTHER.

ON THE PLANET'S SURFACE, HART STOOD IN A DERELICT INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX.

I AM STILL GETTING NO LIFE FORM READING ON MY SENSORS.

ALL THE SAME, IT LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT COMPANY, ISAK.

SUDDENLY, A MEGALOI LUMBERED INTO VIEW —

A MEGALOI — WE
COME IN PEACE!

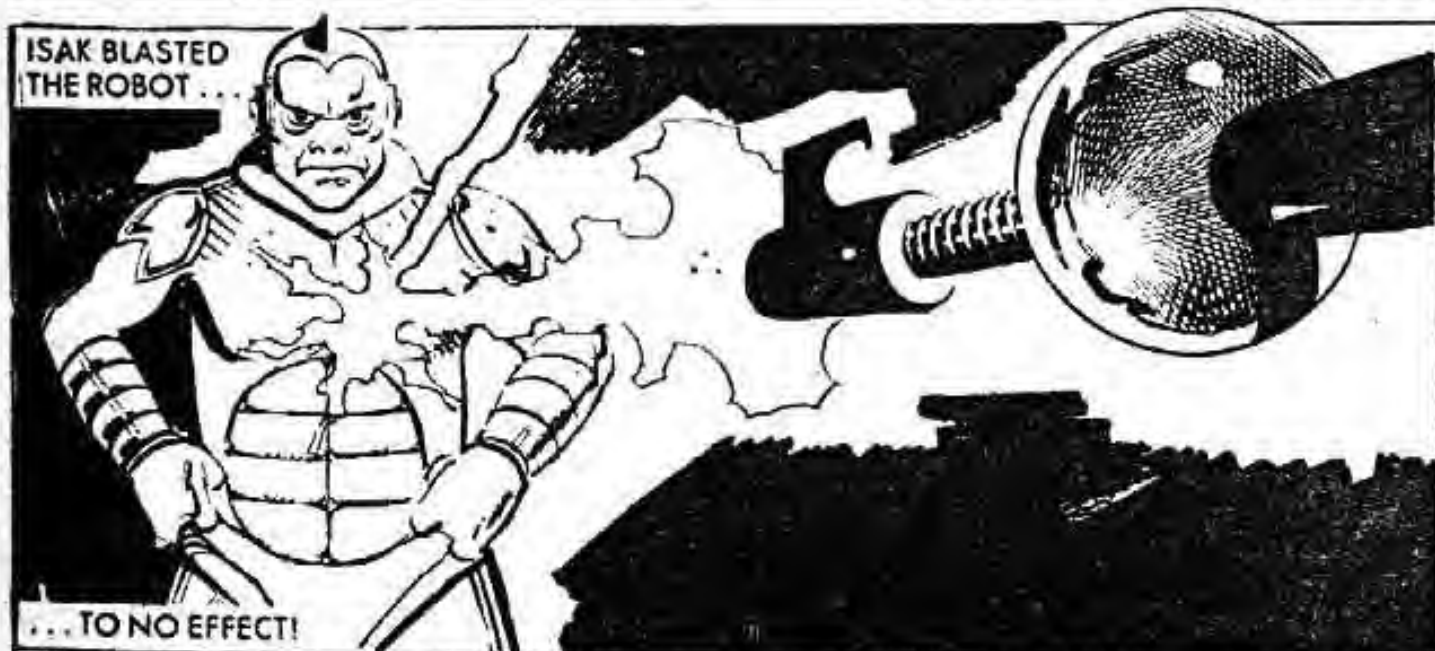
MEGALOI... ROBOTS
OF IMMENSE SIZE... ORIGIN
UNKNOWN... I SHALL
INVESTIGATE MEMORY BANKS.



IT DOESN'T SEEM TO RESPECT
OUR PEACEFUL INTENTIONS.



YOUR BLASTER IS HAVING NO EFFECT,
HART. STAND BACK AND I WILL USE THE
SHIP'S LASER ...



ISAK BLASTED
THE ROBOT ...

... TO NO EFFECT!

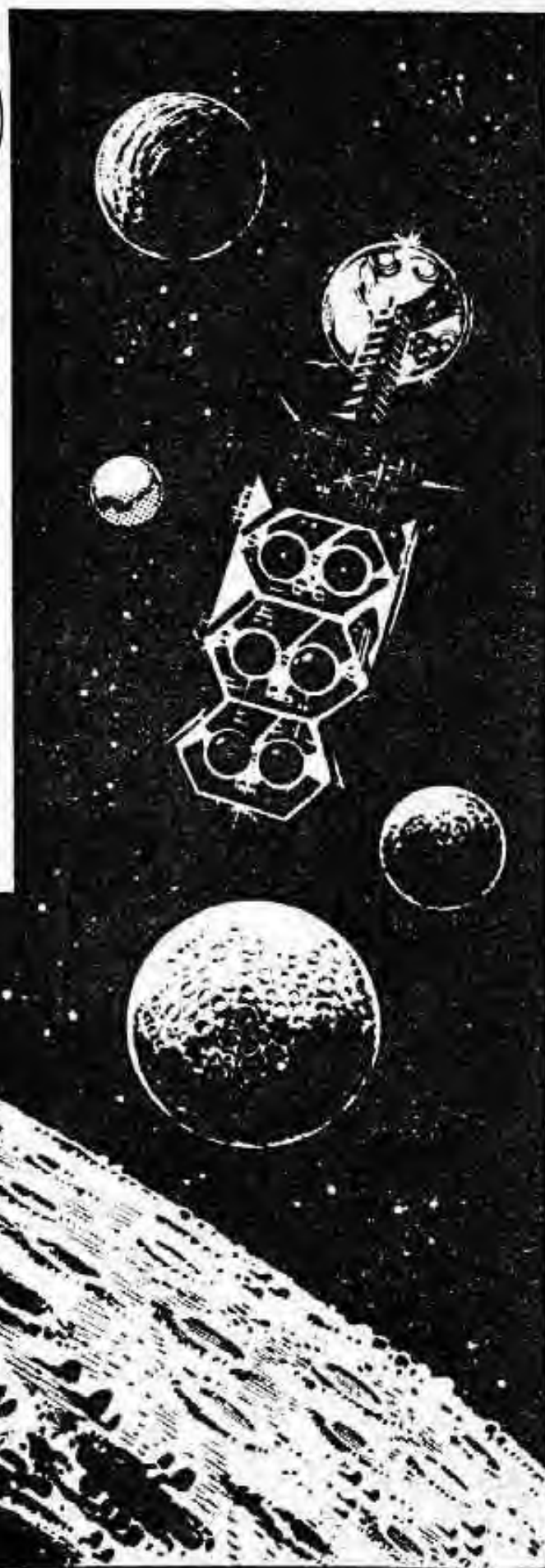


HART RAN OFF THE ROAD—

THE MEGALOI FOLLOWED — AND
BEGAN TO SINK

OF COURSE! IT'S MADE OF
NEUTRONIUM. IT'S SINKING UNDER
ITS OWN WEIGHT!



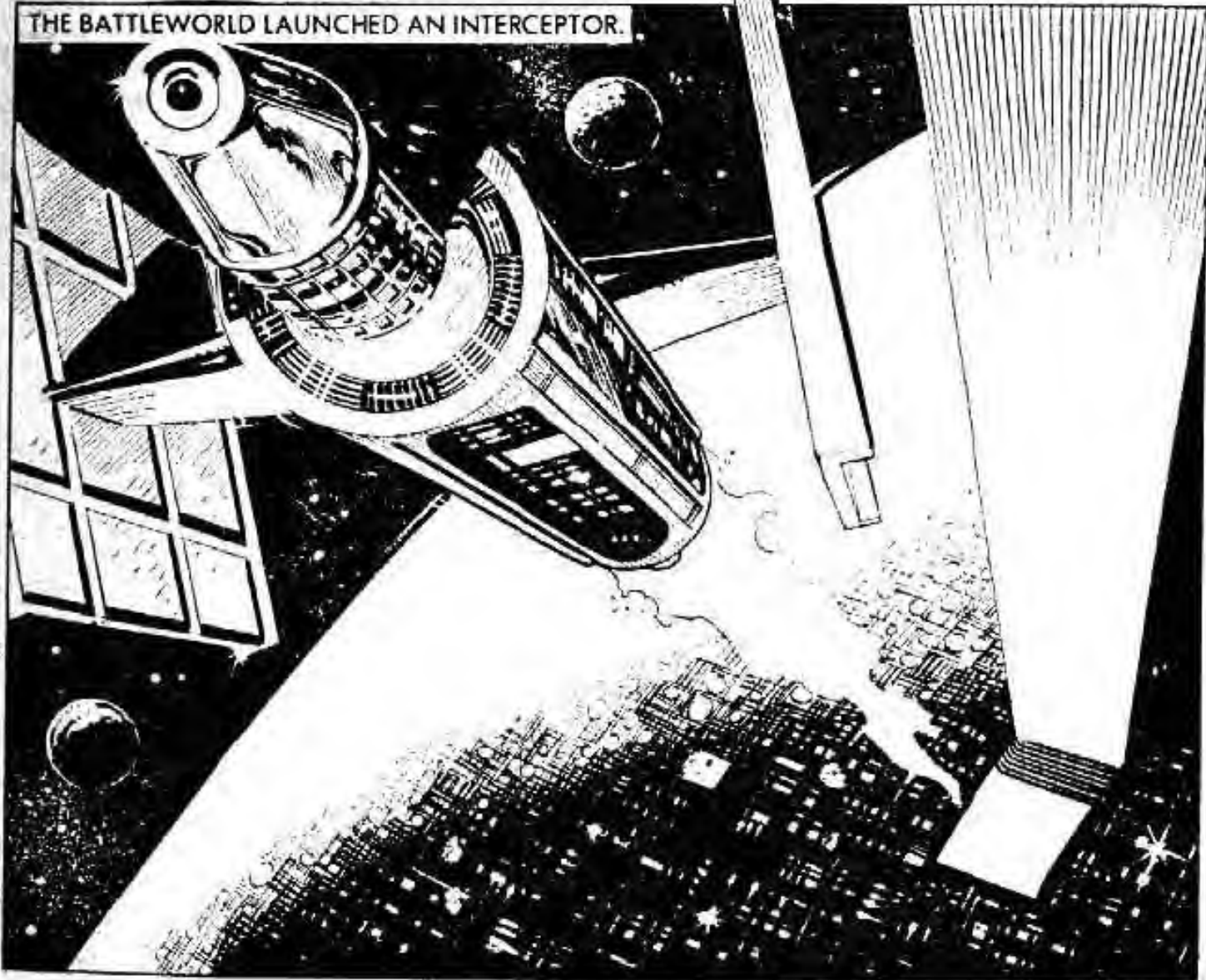


IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE THEY FOUND IT —

GREAT SPACE!
IT'S BIG!



THE BATTLEWORLD LAUNCHED AN INTERCEPTOR.



HART TOOK EVASIVE ACTION.



JUDGING BY THE ACCELERATION OF THAT CRAFT THE PILOT IS OBVIOUSLY A ROBOT. NO LIFEFORM COULD SURVIVE THE PRESSURE SET UP BY THAT SORT OF ACCELERATION.

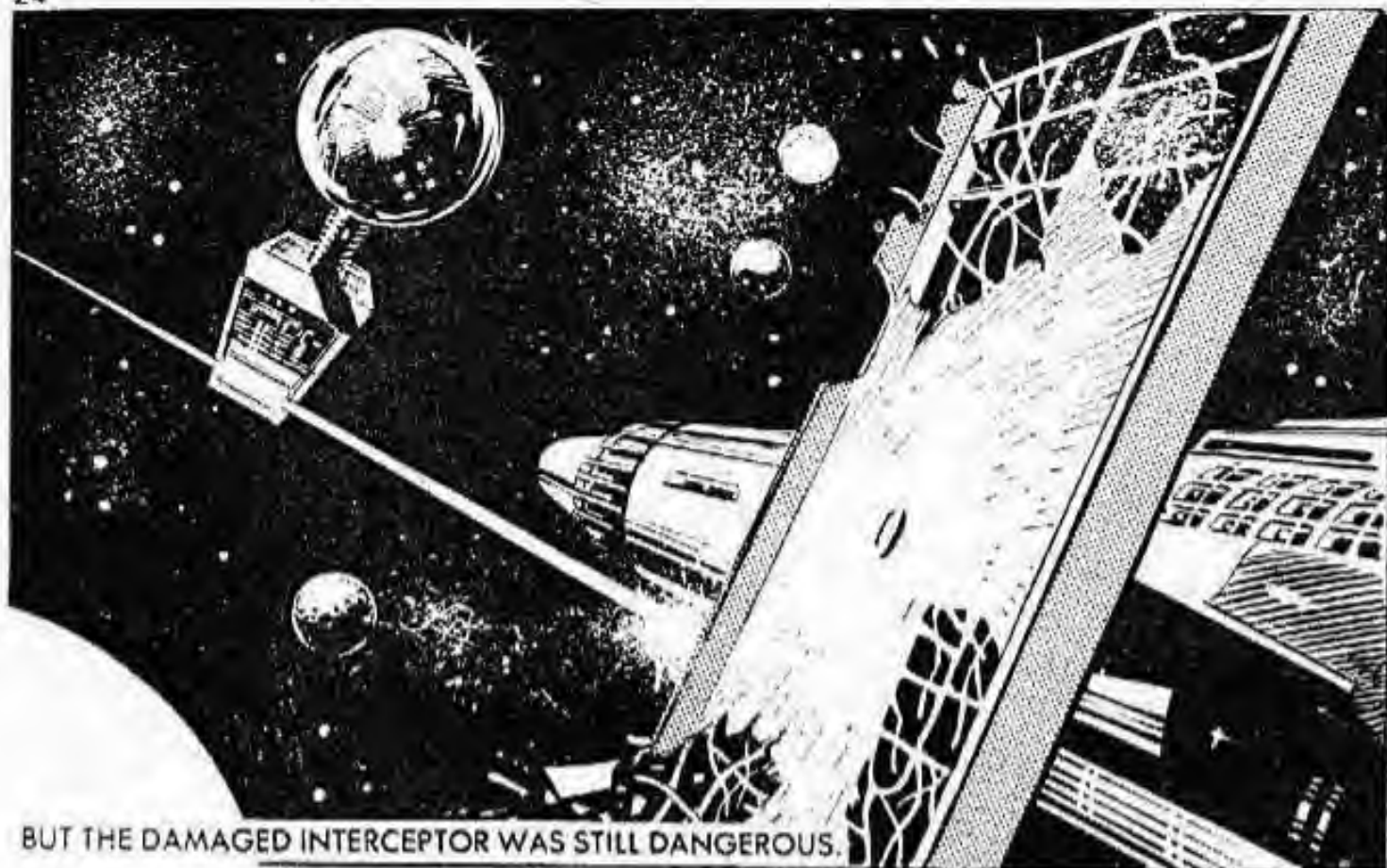




A PHOTON BLAST FROM THE BATTLEWORLD, MEANT FOR TAURUS, STRUCK THE ALIEN CRAFT.



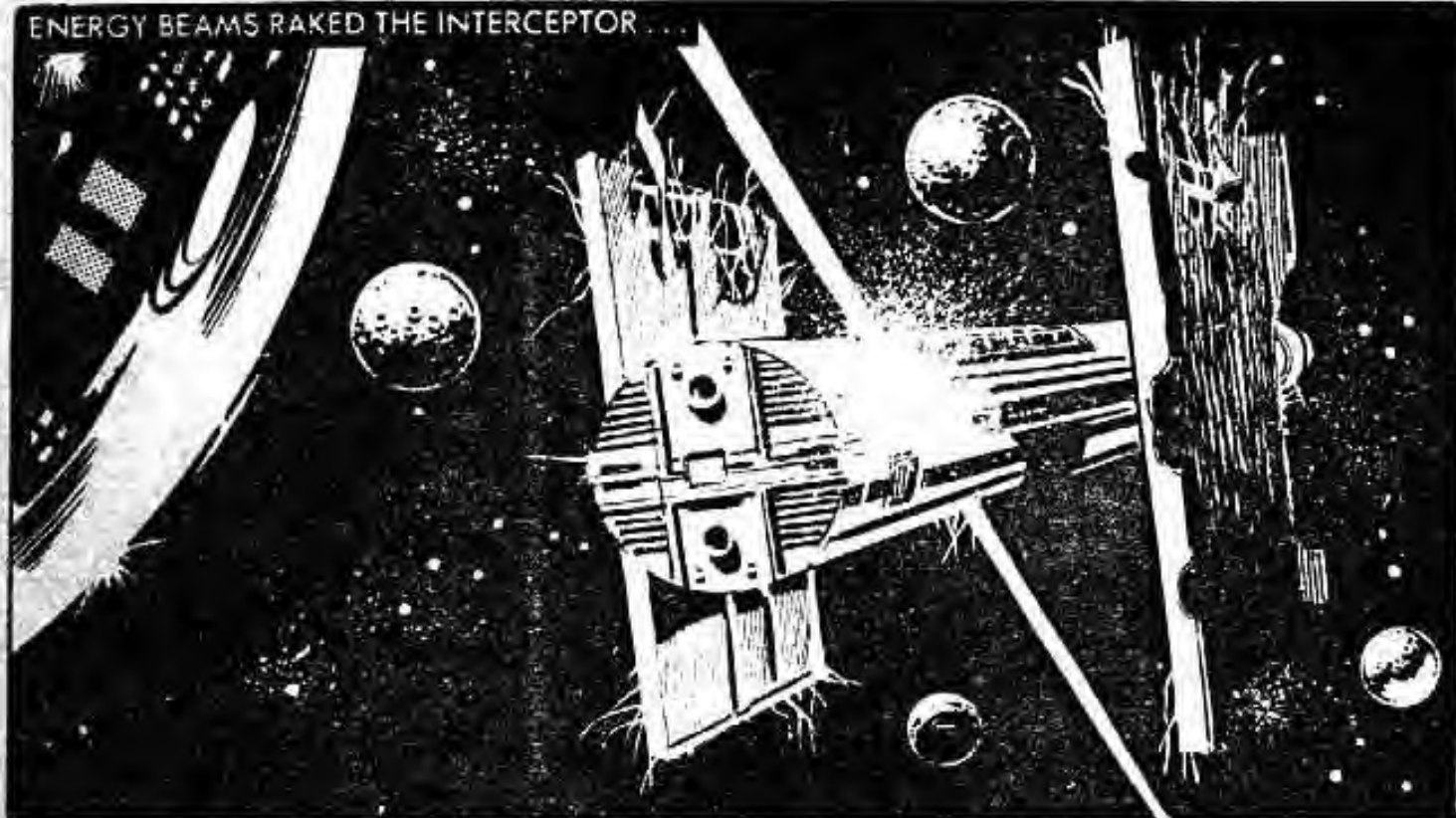
NOW'S MY CHANCE!



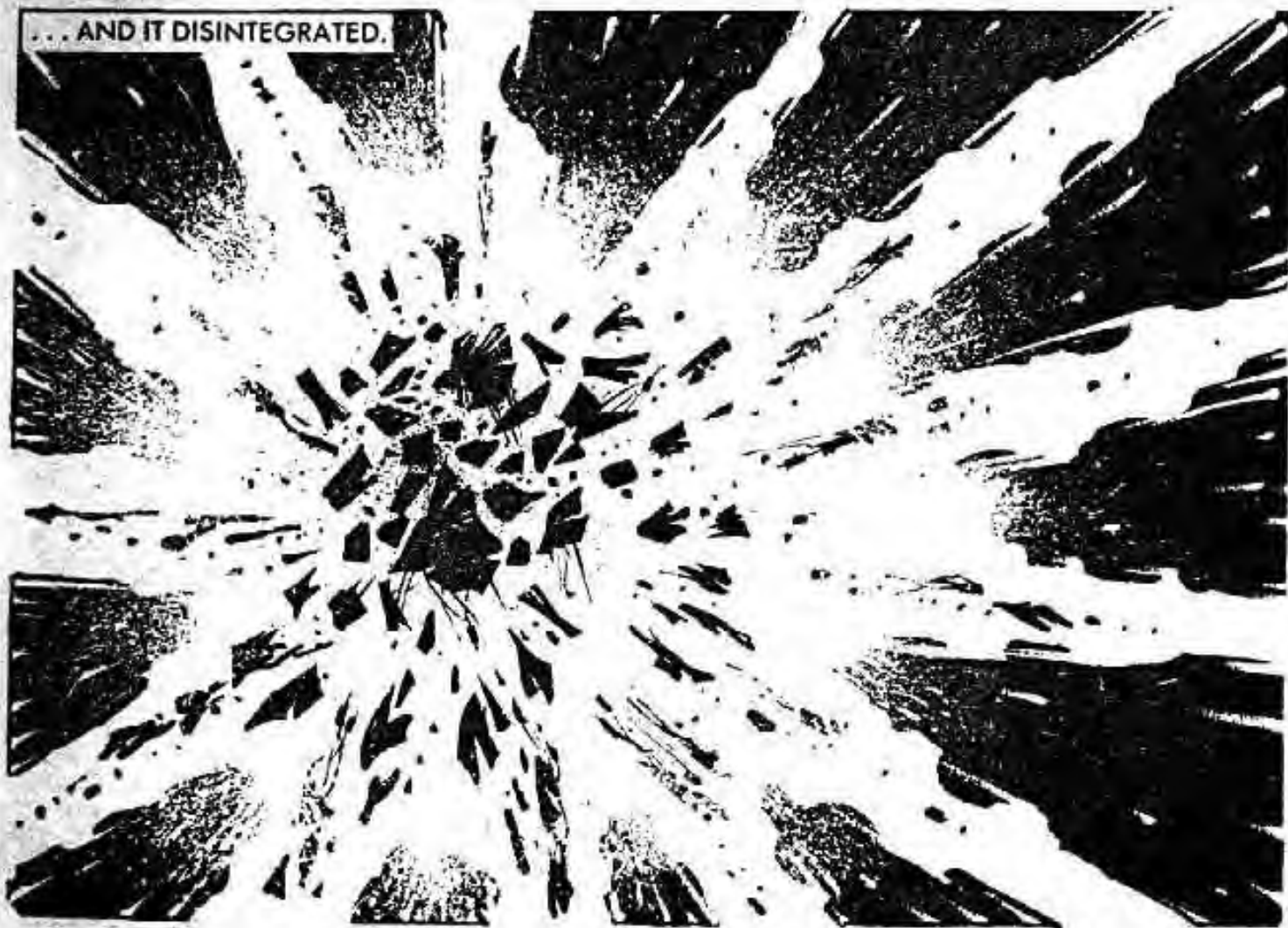
RW-11.



ENERGY BEAMS RAKED THE INTERCEPTOR...



... AND IT DISINTEGRATED.



AT LAST, ISAK CAME UP WITH SOME INFORMATION ABOUT MEGALOIS—

THE ROBOT PILOT'S SURVIVED.
LET'S PICK HIM UP.

THE MEGALOI ARE A
RACE OF SUPER-ROBOTS
THOUGHT TO BE LONG
EXTINCT.

BUT THE PILOT HAD ALREADY FOUND SAFETY.



USING ITS VAST STRENGTH THE ROBOT TORE SHIELDING PANELS ON THE TAURUS —



HART BLASTED OFF AT FULL POWER...



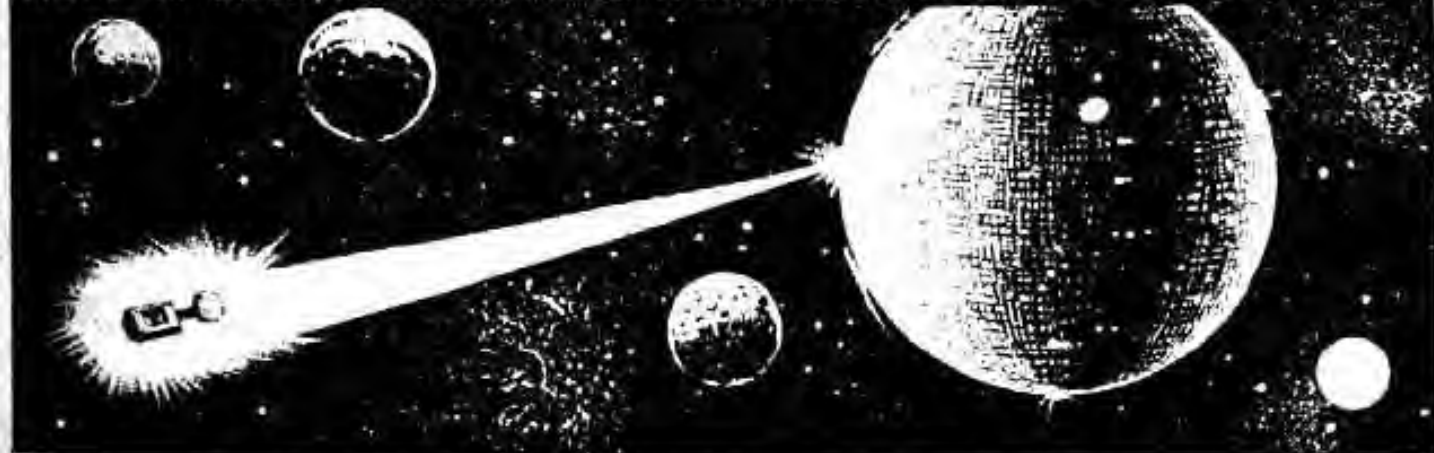
AND TURNED SUDDENLY.



UNABLE TO HALT ITS FORWARD
MOMENTUM, THE ROBOT SPUN OFF INTO SPACE.



SLOWLY BUT SURELY, THE TAURUS WAS BEING DRAGGED TOWARDS THE BATTLEWORLD.



THE TRACTOR BEAM DRAGGED THE TAURUS TOWARDS A DOCKING HATCH.



HART LEFT HIS CRAFT ONCE IT HAD DOCKED.

THE AIR IS
BREATHABLE.

I'M RELYING ON THE FACT
THEY CAN'T KNOW WE'RE IN
CONTINUOUS
TRANSPONDER CONTACT,
ISAK — SO KEEP
LISTENING.


I SHALL, HART.

IMPLANTED IN HIS BRAIN HART HAD A
SOPHISTICATED DEVICE THAT ENABLED
HIM TO TRANSMIT MESSAGES TO ISAK.
ISAK COULD DO THE SAME WITH HART.









CLIMB ON THE PEDESTAL,
EARTHLING, AND KNOW ETERNITY.



NO!

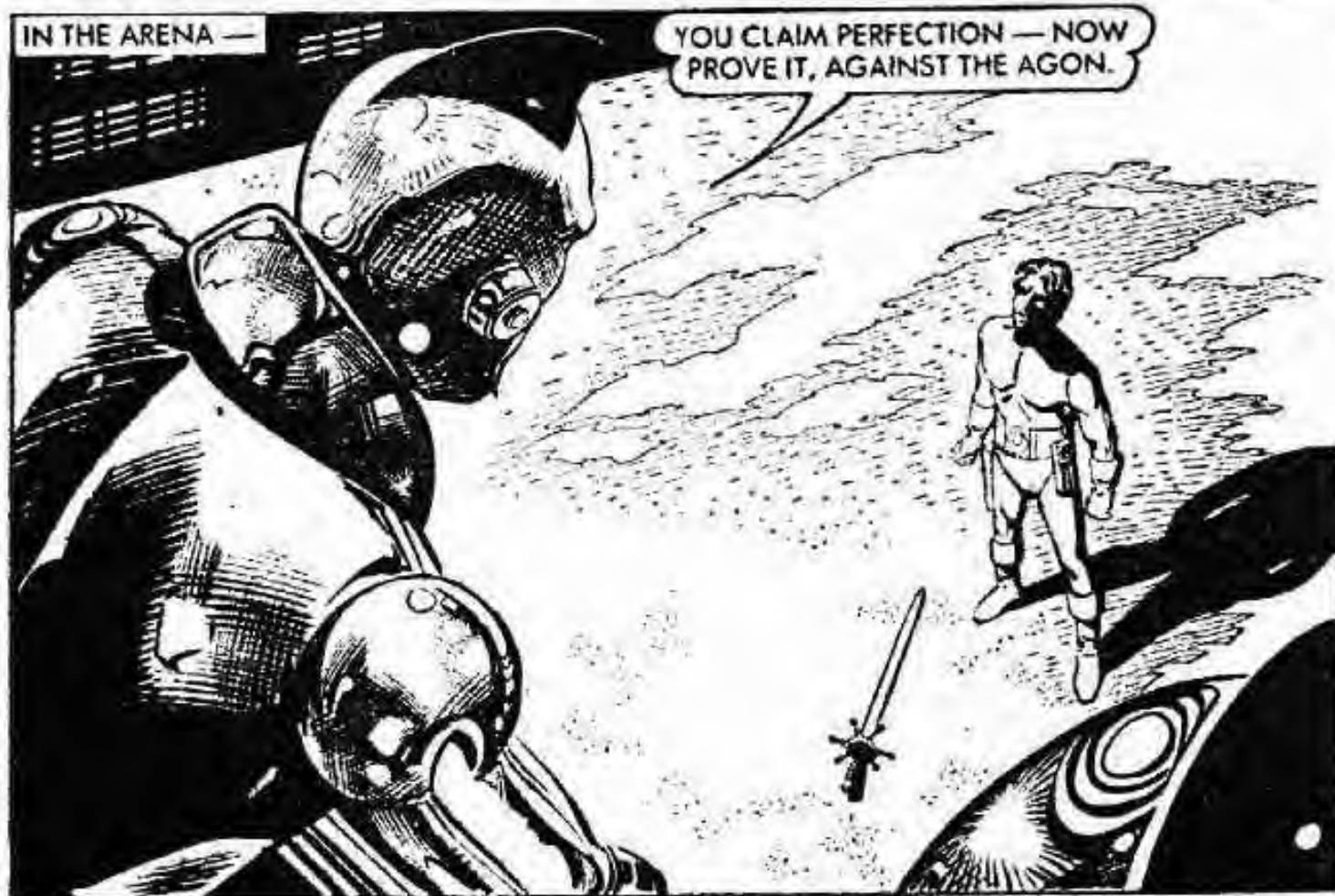
THEY'RE MAD BUT THEY'RE
ALSO VERY DANGEROUS.

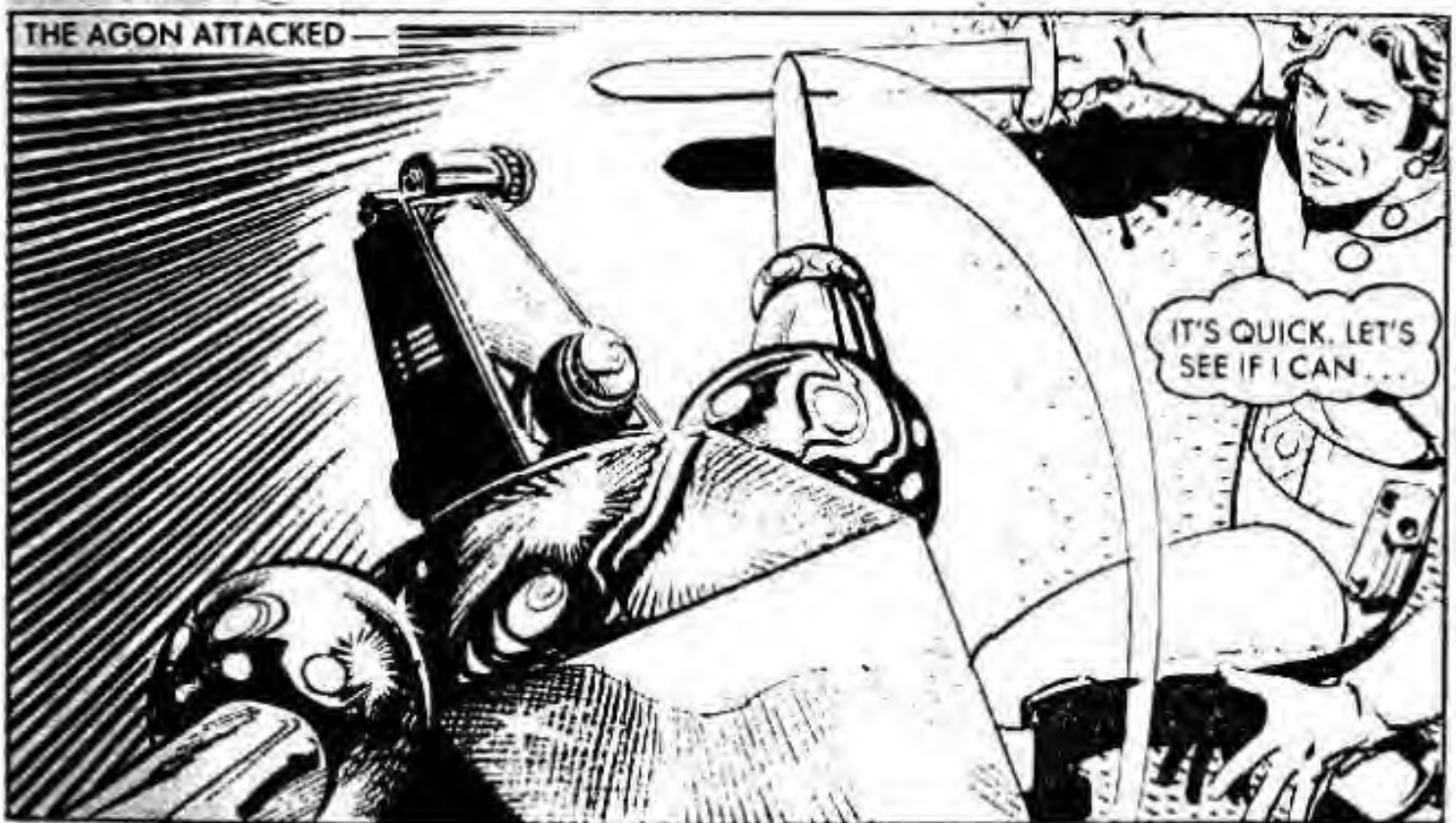
XR 9.





IN THE ARENA —







HART STRUCK AGAIN —



HART DECIDED TO CHANGE THE ODDS —

ISAK — USE A STASIS
FIELD ON IT!

THE AGON FROZE AS ISAK
TRANSMITTED A RADIOBEAM
STASIS FIELD —

THANKS, ISAK!



HART SMASHED THE AGON'S SENSORS.



GREAT SPACE! THAT WAS
A CLOSE SHAVE!





THE MEGAIOI CONFERRED.


THIS IS NO PROOF OF PERFECTION,
BUT IT IS PROOF THAT THE
EARTHLINGS ARE TOO DANGEROUS
TO LIVE.

YES, HUMANITY MUST BE
DESTROYED . . . AND THOROUGHLY.



HART MADE A BID FOR FREEDOM.





YOU CANNOT ESCAPE,
EARTHLING!

YOU CHEATED THE AGON,
EARTHLING, BUT WE
MEGALOI ARE NOT TO BE
CHEATED SO EASILY.

IT'S A PITY A STASIS FIELD
WOULDN'T WORK ON YOU!

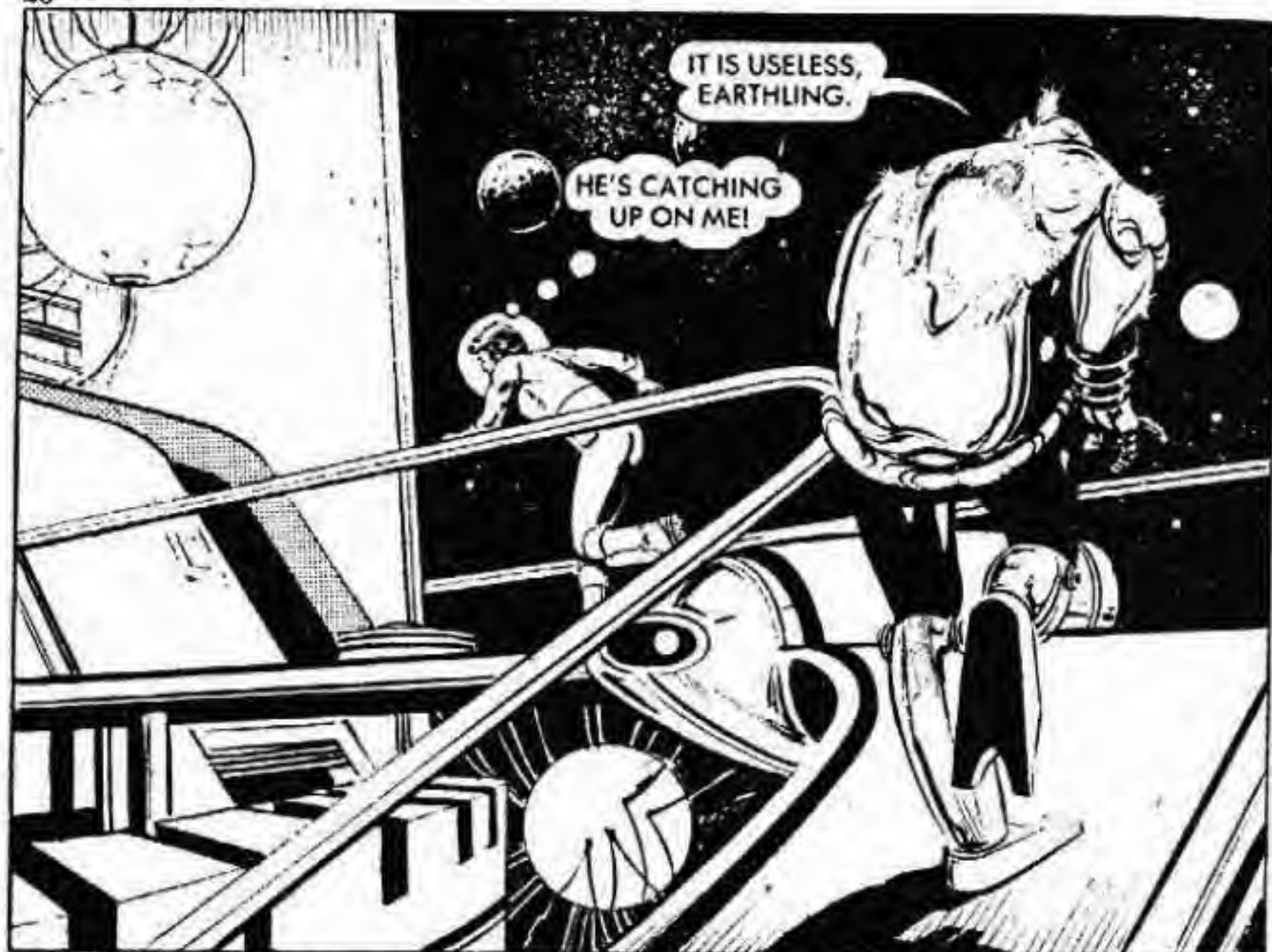
SUDDENLY, AN ALIEN FIGURE APPEARED—



WHAT THE...

BE STILL, MEGALOI 101!
I ORDER IT.











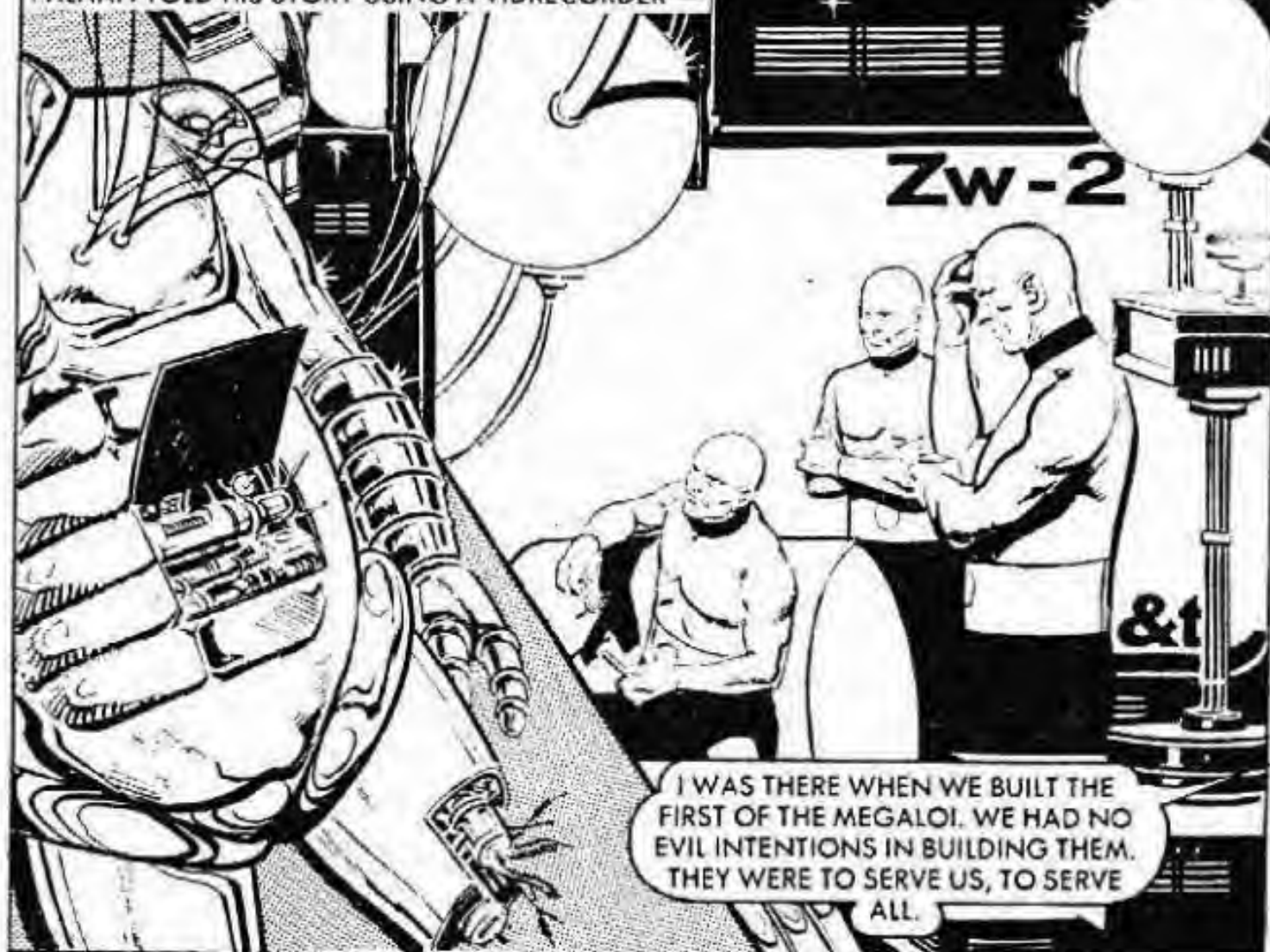
AND I HAVE BEEN WAITING A MILLION YEARS TO MEET
ONE SUCH AS YOU, EARTHLING!

WAITING WHILE A HUNDRED
CIVILIZATIONS WERE DESTROYED.

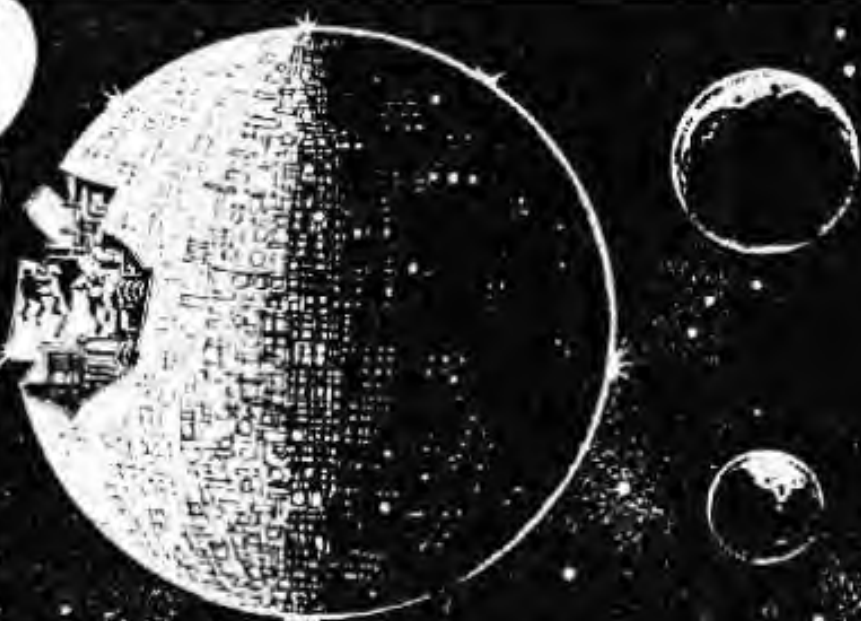


DO NOT JUDGE ME
YET, EARTHLING...

PALAAAN TOLD HIS STORY USING A VIDRECORDER —



IN THEIR TURN THE MEGALOI BUILT THIS WORLD — NOT A BATTLEWORLD THEN, BUT A SHIP TO EXPLORE THE FAR GALAXIES . . . TO HELP INFANT RACES . . . TO MAKE FOR PERFECTION IN THE UNIVERSE . . .






IT WAS A SLAUGHTER!
AND IT WENT ON AND ON...




I ALONE ESCAPED, CAME HERE AS YOU
CAME HERE, TO THIS MASTER CONTROL
ROOM. I DIDN'T COME HERE
AIMLESSLY, BUT INTENT ON
DESTROYING THEM...





I CAME HERE BECAUSE THE MEGALOI DO HAVE A WEAKNESS—THE BATTLEWORLD ITSELF. BECAUSE OF ITS NEUTRONIUM CONSTRUCTION, IT IS SO HEAVY IT WOULD COLLAPSE IN ON ITSELF BUT FOR A PERMANENT FORCE FIELD SURROUNDING IT. THE FORCE FIELD CONTROLLED FROM HERE.

WZ88



THIS IS THE SWITCH THAT CONTROLS THE FORCE FIELD.

THEN WHY WAIT A MILLION YEARS TO DESTROY THEM?



HART PREPARED TO DESTROY THE MEGALOI—

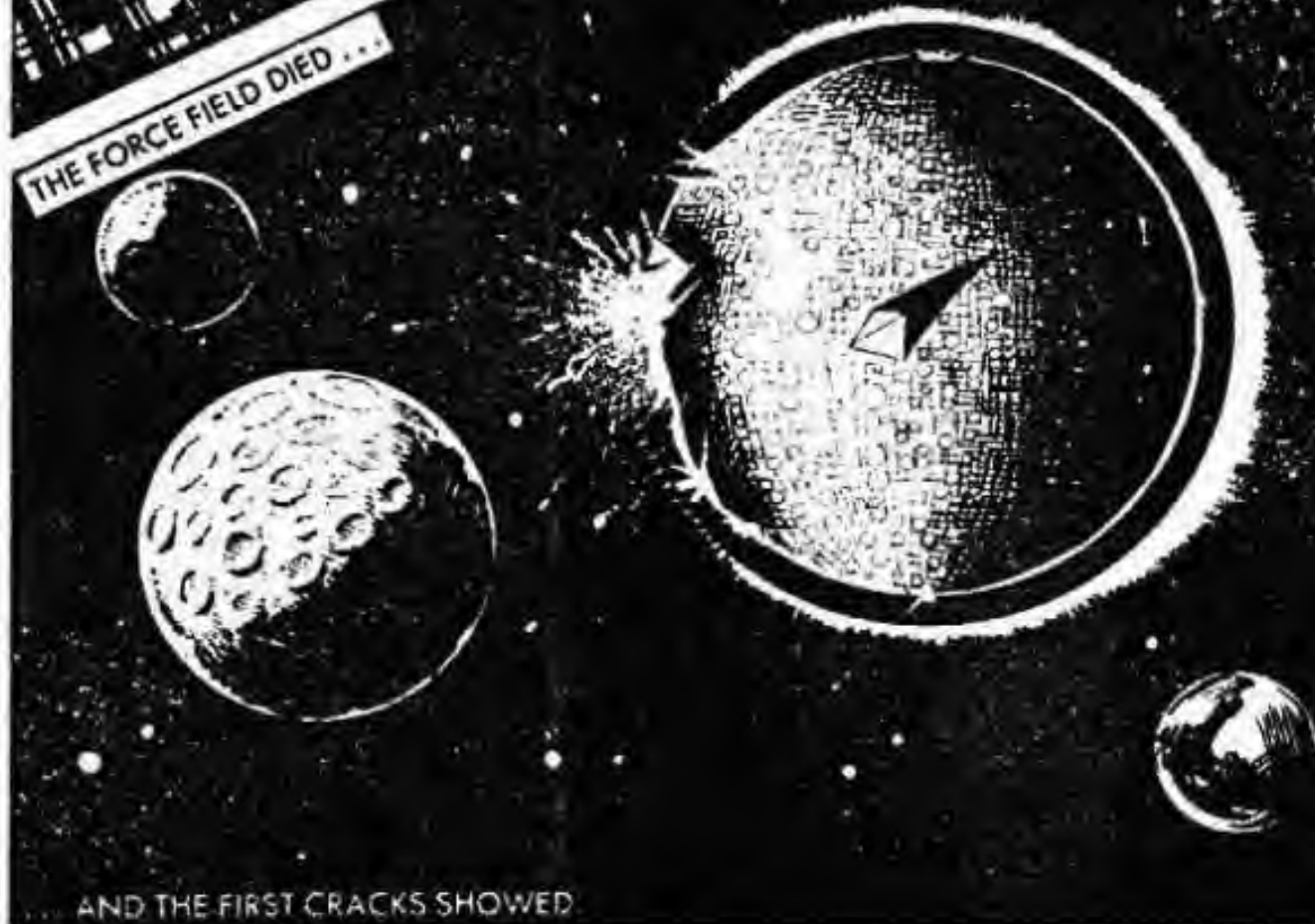
YOU CAN ACT FOR ME. PLEASE,
CLOSE THE SWITCH AND DESTROY
THE FIELD.

HART, THE NAVY'S HERE. THEY'RE
FIGHTING THE MEGALOI.

I SEE THEM.

THE NAVY ATTACKED IN FORCE...





AND THE FIRST CRACKS SHOWED

UNSHIELDED, THE BATTLEWORLD'S IMPLOSION HAD BEGUN



... WITHIN MINUTES IT
COLLAPSED IN ON ITSELF UNDER ITS OWN WEIGHT.

GREAT SPACE!



TAURUS WARPED ALONG THE GIANT CORRIDORS AFTER PICKING UP HART.



ISAK FOUND A WAY OUT.



THANKS,
ISAK.

NO THANKS ARE NECESSARY, HART.
I WAS GETTING VERY BORED BACK
THERE ON THE HANGAR DECK.

HART TRIED TO BREAK AWAY...



... BUT EVEN BLASTING AWAY ON FULL JETS, 'TAURUS' WAS BEING DRAGGED BACK BY THE FORMING BLACK HOLE.





THERE'S ONLY ONE THING FOR IT
—WE'LL GO THROUGH IT!

GIVE ME FULL
HYPER-SPEED, ISAK.



THERE IS SUFFICIENT POWER
FOR YOU TO EJECT, HART.



THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT
I INTEND TO DO...



YOU'RE COMING
TOO, ISAK.

I AM DISPENSABLE...
YOU MUST LEAVE, SIR!

HART PULLED ON AN EJECT SUIT ...



YOU ARE ALMOST BEYOND RESCUE
POINT ... YOU MUST GO.

I'M READY ... OFF WE GO!

THE EJECT SUIT, PROOFED AGAINST
RADIATION COULD PROPEL A SINGLE
PERSON AT VERY HIGH SPEED OVER A
SHORT DISTANCE—BUT LONG ENOUGH TO
BE CLEAR OF ANY POTENTIAL DANGER.



TAURUS HAS GONE!



HOW MUCH POWER DO
YOU HAVE LEFT, ISAK?

ENOUGH TO PROPEL YOU INTO A SPACE
LANE BEFORE YOUR OXYGEN RUNS OUT.

THE COMBINATION OF MAN AND MACHINE HAD TRIUMPHED OVER ADVERSITY. HART AND ISAK WOULD LIVE TO FIGHT AGAIN, AGAINST THE MANY EVIL BEINGS THAT THREATENED THE UNIVERSE.



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DON'T FORGET TO READ THIS MONTH'S

OTHER

STARBLAZER

SPACE ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 95

THE
GATE TO YESTERDAY

APRIL 1979

ON SALE AT YOUR NEWSAGENT'S

EL NATH



PLEIADES

STARBLAZER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY TAURUS

The constellation of Taurus in the Northern Hemisphere contains one of the brightest stars in the sky—Tauri or Aldebaran. In this constellation are two well known star clusters, Pleiades and Hyades. The Crab Nebula is also in this constellation, and is the remains of an explosion witnessed in 1054 AD.

